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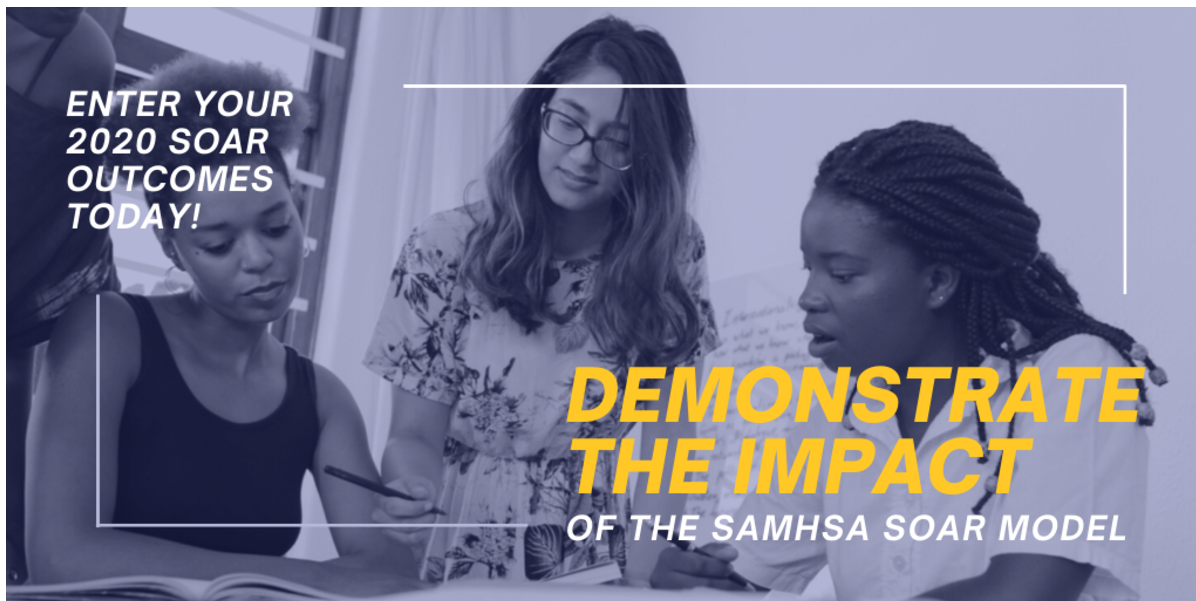
[SSA](#)

[WEBINARS](#)

[SOAR IN YOUR STATE](#)



Demonstrate the Impact of SOAR: Enter Your Outcomes



The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center is working with SOAR providers across the country to collect 2020 SOAR outcomes! We are counting SOAR-assisted Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) applications with decisions between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2020. Report your outcomes in the SOAR Online Application Tracking (OAT) system to demonstrate the power of the SOAR model. If you have questions, please reach out to your SOAR Liaison to help you through the process!

[Enter Your Outcomes Today](#)

Want to learn more about OAT? The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center has created resources to support first-time and experienced OAT users. In 2019, the SOAR TA Center hosted the Maximizing OAT Utilization for SOAR Outcome Tracking webinar. This webinar taught attendees how to access and use the SAMHSA SOAR OAT system, why it is beneficial to track SOAR-assisted SSI/SSDI application decisions, and how to run reports to highlight SOAR success. Also available are the [OAT User Guide](#) and [OAT Reports Guide](#) that you can use as reference materials when entering your SOAR-assisted applications into OAT!

Maryland Creates Coaching Program for First-Time SOAR Providers

Supporting newly trained SOAR case workers through their first SOAR-assisted SSI/SSDI applications can be instrumental in successful outcomes. Carmela George, SOAR Local Lead for Montgomery County, Maryland, facilitated a pilot with five case workers during which she provided coaching and mentorship throughout their initial applications. Throughout the pilot, case workers completed their first SSI/SSDI application, received feedback on their Medical Summary Reports (MSRs), and were provided an opportunity to share challenges they might be facing. As a result of this pilot, five individuals were approved for SSI and/or SSDI benefits, and the participating case workers gained confidence and experience in using the SOAR model.

“Being a part of the cohort was extremely helpful. When first asked to help with the SOAR claim, I felt extremely overwhelmed. There were many forms and timelines to remember that I felt like I did not know where to start. However, once the cohort started, things were much clearer and less overwhelming. Particularly what was helpful was the timeline worksheet that was provided. The worksheet broke down what form needed to be completed, when it was needed to be submitted, and to whom it needed to be sent. The cohort made the process feel a lot less stressful and daunting.”—Maryland Coaching Pilot Participant

We thank Carmela for sharing this success with the SOAR community and for her assistance in helping the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center develop best practices for supporting case workers with their first SOAR-assisted SSI/SSDI applications!

Social Security Administration Working to Meet Customers’ Needs During COVID-19

The Social Security Administration (SSA) remains committed to providing uninterrupted benefits and vital services the public relies on, especially during the current coronavirus pandemic. Customers can speak with a representative by calling their local Social Security office or the national 800 number (800-325-0778). Local office phone numbers can be found online via the [Social Security Office Locator](#).

Although SSA’s offices are not providing service for walk-in visitors, **SSA may be able to schedule an appointment for limited, critical issues if they are unable to help someone by phone or they cannot conduct their business online.**

Customers can also take advantage of SSA’s secure and convenient [online services](#) to:

- apply for [retirement](#), [disability](#), and [Medicare](#) benefits,
- check the status of an application or appeal,

- request a replacement Social Security card (in most areas),
- print a benefit verification letter, and
- much more.

In addition, SSA formed a *Vulnerable Populations Workgroup* to identify segments of the population who may be underserved because of the current operating model of limited or no in-person service. These customers include those who may not have the ability to conduct business via telephone or the internet, or who frequently require third-party assistance. They can include people who are transient or experiencing homelessness, people with limited English proficiency, the aged, individuals with mental illness, and the deaf or hard of hearing.

[Download the SSA Important Information Flyer](#)

Sharing Our Successes

First-Time Provider SOARs in Florida

Vivianne Vonador from Peace River Center in Lakeland, Florida, wrote in to share this incredible success story:

“Vernon had been in several mental health treatment facilities; I met him when he was admitted to the Peace River Crisis Stabilization Unit. Vernon had multiple admissions and discharges to mental health facilities and hospitals and was unable to maintain employment or stable housing. Once I met with him and explained the services I could provide, Vernon was open to accepting help. I submitted his SOAR-assisted disability benefit application in August 2019. He was approved and received full benefits and back pay! Vernon not only received SSDI benefits but Medicaid and Simply dental insurance as well. Vernon left the Peace River Center short-term facility for stable housing with over \$2,000 in SSDI benefits, his own debit card, dental insurance, and Medicaid. I was so happy for Vernon. On top of his success, Vernon was my very first SOAR applicant!”

Congratulations, Vivianne! What an incredible success story. When asked what advice she would give to other SOAR practitioners, Vivianne recommended gathering as many medical forms as possible and, when applicable, getting a physician's signature on the MSR.



New Mexico Provider Helps Veteran SOAR

Kathleen Pugh from Veterans Integration Centers in Albuquerque, New Mexico, shared this wonderful success story with the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center:

“Donnie was referred to me by a Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Case Manager. Donnie had experienced a stroke and was no longer able to continue work due to the impacts on his mobility and speech. I worked with Donnie on his SOAR-assisted application. He was approved for SSDI, and right on time, too, as he had exhausted temporary financial assistance from SSVF!”

Congratulations, Kathleen! Thanks for sharing this fantastic SOAR success. Kathleen's advice to SOAR providers is to coordinate with your state lead as well as the SSA liaison to ensure that you are submitting all forms on time. Thank you, Kathleen!

*Sharing Our Successes stories are edited for brevity and clarity. All client names have been changed to protect anonymity.

Events

[SOARing Over Lunch Conference Calls](#)

August 18, 2020, 1:00-2:00 p.m. ET

The next SOARing Over Lunch Conference Call will take place on August 18, 2020, at 1:00 p.m. ET! The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center hosts this series of informal monthly calls designed to help support SOAR efforts across the country. Participants can join to ask about any SOAR-related question they may have.

Add SOARing Over Lunch to Your Calendar

[Webinar Materials Now Available: Using the SOAR Model with Social Security Administration Appeals](#)

In this webinar, held on June 18, 2020, the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center introduced its updated *SOAR Appeals Toolkit* designed to assist SOAR providers with appealing SSI/SSDI denials. Presenters offered practice tips on effectively representing SOAR applicants with appeals at the reconsideration and administrative law judge (ALJ) levels. The materials from this webinar, including the webinar recording, slide presentation, and *Appeals Toolkit*, are now available for on-demand access.

Federal Updates

[Updated SSA-3368 Disability Report—Adult](#)

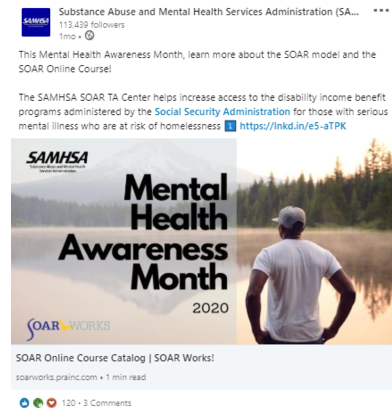
SSA has updated the SSA-3368 Disability Report—Adult. Most of the changes are related to formatting but SSA has also updated the following sections:

- Q4e: related to Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA)
- Q5b: Added a reason for the Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Q5d: Added a new question about what language the applicant primarily uses
- Q5e: Added follow-up questions regarding reading
- Q5f: Added follow-up questions regarding writing

Please use this version for all new applications.

**Get Social with the SAMHSA SOAR
TA Center**

Hear more about what SAMHSA SOAR is up to via [@samhsagov](https://twitter.com/samhsagov) on Twitter, [@samhsa](https://www.facebook.com/samhsa) on Facebook, and [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](https://www.linkedin.com/company/substance-abuse-and-mental-health-services-administration) on LinkedIn!



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) Technical Assistance (TA) Center is sponsored by SAMHSA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Disclaimer: The SAMHSA SOAR Technical Assistance Center is sending this eNews with support from SAMHSA, HHS. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official view of HHS or SAMHSA.

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